Watershed Data Pilot Project (WDPP)
Steering Committee Correspondence

Washington State Conservation Commission

From: bioforsalmon@comcast.net [mailto:bioforsalmon@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, May 03, 2006 3:30 PM
To: Koch, David (DIS); Demery, Linda Jo (DIS); Deb Naslund; Craig Partridge; Dzinbal, Ken; David Price; Randy McIntosh; Glenn Briskin; Amy Hatch-Winecka; Clark, Mark (ECY WCC); Crawford, Bruce; Steve Leider; Becker, Debbie (ECY)
Subject: Watershed Data Pilot Project

WDPP Steering Committee:

Just an update on the project. We have completed all the vendor debriefings and survived without a protest. That being said, one vendor is particularly disappointed and may be actively meeting with stakeholders. We will also be actively getting the word out on the project.

Consistent with your guidance, we created a project update that shows our attention to the legislation and how the project and vendor choice are good fits. Have a look at this. If you have any guidance on communications necessary, please drop us a note.

The next Steering Committee meeting is May 17 from 1030 to 1200 at the Conservation Commission. We will be providing an update on the project startup and discussing any issues that arise. The brief presentation on the confidentiality issues will come up again as we get more input on that.

Carol and Glenn met with Enkon last week to review the system, their facilities, and the proposal and contract. It was a very successful meeting. We came away even more impressed with the capabilities of their product, their great attitude and understanding of our business, and their professionalism. Enkon is enthusiastically preparing for the start of work. We are hoping to arrange a brief web demonstration of the system for you at the steering committee meeting using Webex. This will be a tool that we plan to use extensively during the project to tie together our statewide participants.

Please have a look at the project update and put the steering committee meeting on your schedule. Please keep communicating any concerns, input you may receive from others, and ideas for us to consider. Thanks for your support,

Glenn and Carol

Watershed Data Pilot Project (WDPP) Update for Late April 2006
This update marks the achievement of an important milestone – completion of vendor selection. As this and future updates will be more widely distributed to project stakeholders and participants, this update reviews project background.

Background:
The project's enabling legislation, Section 405 of the 05-07 Capital Budget, called for a pilot project implemented by a commercial vendor:

- *"to test a web-based, single repository with mapping capabilities to track, manage, and report at local, regional, and statewide bases all habitat projects developed by the conservation districts and*
- *to test the effectiveness of a single repository for habitat data collected in a selected watershed through use of hand-held data collection devices by the departments of ecology, natural resources, and fish and wildlife."*

The legislation required that:

- *"The commission will work with the departments of ecology, fish and wildlife, and natural resources to select a watershed in western Washington, in which to demonstrate the effectiveness of the data repository system."*
- *"The commission will collaborate with the natural resources agencies, the department of information services, and the governor's salmon recovery office and submit a joint report with recommendations to the legislature and the office of financial management by December 1, 2006."*

Further clarification received from Rep. Hans Dunshee, the House Capital Budget Chair, in January 2006 stated expectations that at least six conservation districts would be involved in the pilot: three from eastern and three from western Washington. Further expectations included being able to view environmental data for a selected watershed from several entities that collect that data.

The WDPP Steering Committee, representative of all agencies specified in the legislation plus tribes and local entities, approved both a Project Charter and a Request for Proposal (RFP) to acquire a single vendor solution that would closely match the legislative guidance. The following requirements will be fulfilled by the vendor selected and WSCC to implement and support the WDPP:

- Use a commercially provided Web-based system to capture data on Conservation District (CD) habitat projects and their specific habitat restoration objectives
- Capture implementation and effectiveness monitoring data that tracks the projects' implementation of objectives and measurements of the projects' effectiveness in improving habitat health
- Create a database that follows standards for project and monitoring data developed by the Governor's Forum on Monitoring and the NOAA/Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund
  - Following standards will allow aggregation of data at local, regional, and state levels
- Capture data on as many projects as possible from the participating CDs
  - CD's agreeing to participate include Asotin, Palouse, Okanogan, Underwood, Whatcom, Skagit, Jefferson, Mason, Thurston, and Lewis

- o Import project data from the IAC/SRFB PRISM system, the WSCC CREP database, and possibly local CD databases to include project history with minimal duplicate data entry
- Develop handheld monitoring data collection capabilities for testing by multiple entities in one or two selected western Washington watersheds
- Include state standard compliant GIS capabilities as an integrated part of WDPP
  - o This will enable Web access to useful combinations of WDPP data with GIS layers showing environmental data from several entities
- Make WDPP data accessible through flexible reporting by WSCC, CDs, partner agencies, and the public with appropriate confidentiality and security.
- Complete the required legislative report by December 1, 2006 including lessons learned from WDPP on the effectiveness of a shared project repository, handheld data collection, and integration of project and environmental data from several entities via GIS in a single Web-based repository.
  - o Include alternatives and projections for future use.
  - o Demonstrate WDPP through the next legislative session.
- Preserve all data and assets created by the WDPP.

Vendor Selection:

The RFP resulted in receipt of 11 proposals. The evaluation team represented the partnering state and local agencies. Four finalists including Paladin, Linnet, Enkon Information Systems, and Enviance presented their systems and approach to the evaluation team. All four vendors presented existing systems configurable to our needs with limited development. All bids were within cost limits. The selection was difficult. Enkon Information Systems received a clear top ranking based a strong showing across all evaluation criteria. Enkon's strengths included:

- Enkon is a Pacific Northwest company (Victoria, BC and Seattle) with strong environmental credentials in habitat and environmental project implementation.
- The Enkon enviroLIS system demonstrated an easy to navigate and understand user interface which was readily customized to our requirements.
- The system's database will easily support and encourage the standards-based data structure for projects, objectives, and monitoring data specified for WDPP.
- GIS is tightly integrated with the system allowing GIS-based navigation of the data, reporting, and GIS-based analysis of WDPP data with GIS layers of environmental data imported from several entities.
- Easy to use and very capable user accessible reporting tools with highly customizable output formats are included.
- The handheld solution is based on technology that will allow rapid creation of new standard forms for monitoring data collection.
- Enkon has good references for strong project management, technical delivery, hosting, and on time/on budget results on similar projects.
- A very detailed and specific project plan and approach was proposed.
- Enkon provides industrial strength secure system hosting and support in use by their many clients and available as a service long term if needed (ASP model).

Project Status Highlights:
- WDPP remains close to schedule and budget
    - The May 10 target for vendor startup is achievable
    - The vendor bid was within budget with a 10% contingency
- DIS has approved the project Investment Plan
- Interviews with the CDs are identifying project data and opportunities:
    - Types of projects to be captured
    - Types of reporting that would be helpful locally
    - Types of features that would encourage usage by adding local value

In May and June, WDPP Will:
- Complete contract negotiations and start work
- Prepare CD's and stakeholders for meetings in May to validate requirements
- Complete project planning and scheduling for the entire project
- Continue active stakeholder communications including a demonstration of the selected system

Future Milestone Targets:
- Start of pilot system usage July 10
- Completion of adequate project and monitoring data capture November 1
- Import of GIS layers with several entities' environmental data NLT November 1
- Report to the legislature December 1
- Final demonstrations through March 31, 2007

Challenges:
- An ambitious schedule
- A tight budget
- Assuring a productive vendor startup and system configuration process
- Arranging CD and participating agency project involvement
- Controlling project scope while including capabilities that will motivate CD and partner agency usage
- Identify policies and practices to manage CD project data confidentiality requirements

April 27, 2006

Ms. Debbie Becker
Watershed Data Pilot Project Director
Washington State Conservation Commission
PO Box 47721
Olympia, WA 98504-7721

Dear Ms. Becker:

This is to inform you that Paladin Data Systems, Corporation Board of Directors has decided not to protest the IAC/WCC Watershed Data Pilot Project RFP selection results.

This decision is arrived at in spite of 1) how unfairly we believe the selection process was handled, and 2) the high degree that due process was abused in arriving at a selection. We believe that the following is demonstrably true: the evaluators were negatively biased; the scoring was not carried out as defined in the RFP; and, indeed, the scoring was based on criteria not published in the RFP.

While this would normally be ample grounds for formal protest, Paladin Data Systems fears that such action would damage our relationships with individual conservation districts, and would lead to the further spread of unsubstantiated rumors against our company and its product.

Paladin Data Systems responded to the RFP within the framework of the legislatures authorizing statute:

"test the effectiveness of using a web-based, single repository with mapping capabilities to track, manage, and report at local, regional, and statewide bases all habitat projects developed by the conservation districts"

We also considered the Conservation Commission's language to the governor:

"The Conservation Commission requests the ability to take the two conservation districts that are already using a web-based data collection, reporting and financial accounting system and integrate that with the Conservation Commission and add a Western Washington Conservation district"

"This proposal is to provide for a pilot project that integrates natural resource data systems with emphasis on the financial management of these projects"

"The long-term goal is to provide a mechanism that allows the management of projects statewide."

"The ability to track all district projects instead of just those funded by the Commission. This enables district employees to have a better scope of their overall natural resource management"

It wasn't until after the debriefing that we were able to re-evaluate the language in the RFP in light of your explanations of how the funding had been re-purposed to support improving the project reporting functionality of the IAC's PRISM system in support of the comprehensive monitoring strategy. Armed with this new understanding many of the actions we previously couldn't understand, such as grossly de-scoping both functionality and availability, finally became clear in their purpose of supporting the IAC's project effectiveness & implementation monitoring efforts:

Both implementation and effectiveness monitoring are necessary to evaluate specific projects or classes of projects. Implementation monitoring is determining whether an action was implemented. It is a yes/no answer and does not require environmental data. It is usually a low cost monitoring activity. Effectiveness monitoring measures environmental parameters to ascertain whether the actions implemented were effective in creating a desired outcome. For example, did the planted trees produce shading for the stream?

Source: Comprehensive monitoring strategy and action plan for watershed health and salmon recovery

This direction also explains why, despite the fact that the RFP stated *"Through this pilot project, the Legislature hopes to learn more about how a commercial system might help conservation districts consolidate data on habitat projects and habitat health."*, they have elected to not implement a commercial system, but instead are building a customized software component based on a data model that the RFP coordinator architected during the RFP process to extend the IAC's existing PRISM system in Olympia.

Until hearing the RFP coordinator's explanations in the debriefing interview, we were at a loss to understand how so many of our scores appeared to have been marked down for "Not having full GIS capability", when the RFP only called for a few specific GIS capabilities which our solution fully supported. As the RFP coordinator stated, not only were they rating based on "Full GIS Capability", but they were looking for a specific vendor's implementation of GIS (ESRI). Of course, we now understand that funding has been re-purposed to support the expansion of the existing IAC's PRISM data to give it additional GIS capabilities based on ESRI technologies. Had we understood that this was their intention we would have provided additional information to demonstrate how our system & data integrates with ESRI GIS products.
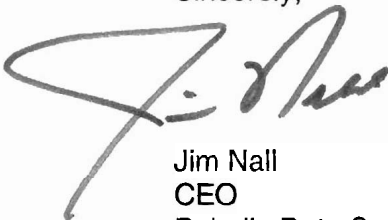
We understood the scope of the project as envisioned by the WCC was a state wide project/data management (including financial data) roll out to "all Conservation Districts" to manage their projects of all types and funding sources, including planned, in progress and completed projects. Paladin could have accomplished that task for the original 500K budget. The current plan is to spend nearly half of the of the budget on project

management consulting services and overhead, and the remainder to build a small GIS data mart reporting system for "Effectiveness & Implementation Monitoring" for completed SRFB/CREP projects.

As you know we have been working in the field with conservation districts and Tribal government for over four years. During that time Paladin has developed a complete understanding of the conservation districts requirements and has built an end to end software solution that supports most of their project management and data management needs. We have developed a great relationship with these folks over the years and have gained their trust. We were very disappointed that they did not include anyone from the Conservation District community during their evaluations. We don't believe we could keep that trust and be connected to this project in its current form, especially in the event that the RFP selection was somehow overturned.

In closing, I am disappointed as a Washington state business owner and taxpayer who employs over 60 software engineers that these dollars are not being used for their intended purpose here in the state to benefit in-state organizations and companies, but that they are sending this work not only out of the state, but out of the country. Our company and the state need the work.

Sincerely,

Jim Nall
CEO
Paladin Data Systems, Corp.